

Translating the needs into money, we are confronted with the prospect that the Nation's capital outlay for highways should be more than doubled in the post-Interstate period.

To quote once again from the 1968 Highway Needs Report of the Department of Transportation:

"The average annual estimated needs for all roads and streets for 1973-85, totaling \$17.4 billion, are more than double the \$8.5 billion per year estimated annual accomplishments during the remainder of the current program period, 1965-72."

In the view of the American Road Builders' Association, it is vital to the Nation that we make a substantial attack *now* on the tremendous backlog of work.

An early acceleration of the ABC program also makes good economic sense because the rising cost of acquiring right-of-way and the rising cost of highway construction will make the roads built in future years more expensive than the roads built now.

An increase of \$500 million in the annual level of authorizations for the ABC program would, of course, create an additional drain on the Highway Trust Fund. In view of the fact that the Trust Fund had a cash balance of approximately \$521 million at the end of calendar 1967, a modest increase in the ABC authorizations might be funded from existing Trust Fund balances. Or, the Congress might consider some modification of the Byrd Amendment, or additional financing proposals, in view of the serious requirements of the ABC systems.

We see this, in short, as an interim proposal for a transitional program, leading the way for a long-range program for the improvement of the primary and secondary systems.

The American Road Builders' Association believes that such a program would be in the best interest of the motoring public of the Nation.

Mr. HOLMES. You are a familiar with the composition of the American Road Builders Association, and I do want to emphasize that we are a federation not only of businessmen but of public and private engineers, highway engineers.

I wish to direct my remarks this morning primarily to the ABC systems.

Certain facts seem to be evident. First, there has been no increase in Federal-aid ABC authorization since 1964.

Second, the cost of improving the ABC highways has increased substantially since then.

Third, the needs of the ABC systems are extensive and urgent.

In light of these facts, the American Road Builders Association is urging that the authorization level for the ABC systems be increased to \$1.5 billion for each of the fiscal years 1970 and 1971.

When the distinguished chairman of the Public Works Committee introduced the legislation which became the Federal-aid Highway Act of 1956, he stated the view of the committee that the authorization for the ABC program should be increased in annual increments until an authorization level of \$1 billion was reached. This was reached in 1964.

The legislative history shows a congressional intent to keep the ABC program in balance with the interstate program, in view of the fact that the ABC highways serve as feeders and connectors with the Interstate System. But ABC authorizations have not been increased in proportion to the increase in interstate authorizations since 1964.

The 1968 interstate cost estimate, recently submitted to Congress by the Department of Transportation, contains ample evidence of the increased cost of building highways.

The estimate, of course, does not pertain directly to the ABC programs, but a large share of the itemized cost increases identified therein are applicable to the ABC program. This is true of the unit price